

In the United States Court of Federal Claims
OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS
No. 21-1677V

ELIZABETH SEARS,

Petitioner,

v.

SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES,

Respondent.

Chief Special Master Corcoran

Filed: March 4, 2024

Jonathan Joseph Svitak, Shannon Law Group, P.C., Woodridge, IL, for Petitioner.

Benjamin Patrick Warder, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, for Respondent.

DECISION ON DAMAGES¹

On August 9, 2021, Elizabeth Sears filed a petition for compensation under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. §300aa-10, *et seq.*² (the “Vaccine Act”). Petitioner alleged that she suffered a shoulder injury related to vaccine administration (“SIRVA”) as the result of an influenza (“flu”) vaccine received on September 20, 2020. Petition (ECF No. 1) at 1; see *also* Amended Petition filed July 11, 2022 (ECF No. 22). The case was assigned to the Special Processing Unit of the Office of Special Masters.

On February 7, 2024, a ruling on entitlement was issued, finding Petitioner entitled to compensation for SIRVA. On March 1, 2024, Respondent filed a proffer on award of compensation (“Proffer”). Respondent represented that Petitioner agrees with the

¹ Because this Decision contains a reasoned explanation for the action taken in this case, it must be made publicly accessible and will be posted on the United States Court of Federal Claims' website, and/or at <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/uscourts/national/cofc>, in accordance with the E-Government Act of 2002. 44 U.S.C. § 3501 note (2018) (Federal Management and Promotion of Electronic Government Services). **This means the Decision will be available to anyone with access to the internet.** In accordance with Vaccine Rule 18(b), Petitioner has 14 days to identify and move to redact medical or other information, the disclosure of which would constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy. If, upon review, I agree that the identified material fits within this definition, I will redact such material from public access.

² National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, Pub. L. No. 99-660, 100 Stat. 3755. Hereinafter, for ease of citation, all section references to the Vaccine Act will be to the pertinent subparagraph of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa (2018).

proffered award. *Id.* at 2. Based on the record as a whole, I find that Petitioner is entitled to an award as stated in the Proffer.

Pursuant to the terms stated in the attached Proffer, I award a lump sum payment of \$54,592.90 (representing \$53,500.00 for pain and suffering, and \$1,092.90 for out-of-pocket expenses) in the form of a check payable to Petitioner. This amount represents compensation for all damages that would be available under Section 15(a).

The Clerk of Court is directed to enter judgment in accordance with this decision.³

IT IS SO ORDERED.

s/Brian H. Corcoran

Brian H. Corcoran
Chief Special Master

³ Pursuant to Vaccine Rule 11(a), entry of judgment can be expedited by the parties' joint filing of notice renouncing the right to seek review.

**IN THE UNITED STATES COURT OF FEDERAL CLAIMS
OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS**

ELIZABETH SEARS,

Petitioner,

v.

SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES,

Respondent.

No. 21-1677V (ECF)
Chief Special Master Corcoran

RESPONDENT’S PROFFER ON AWARD OF COMPENSATION

On August 9, 2021, Elizabeth Sears (“petitioner”) filed a petition for compensation under the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, as amended, 42 U.S.C. §§ 300aa-1 to -34 (“Vaccine Act”), alleging that she suffered a Shoulder Injury Related to Vaccine Administration (“SIRVA”), as defined in the Vaccine Injury Table, following administration of an influenza vaccine that she received on September 20, 2020. ECF No. 1 at 1. On July 11, 2022, petitioner filed an amended petition for compensation. ECF No. 19. The amended petition provided an expanded set of facts based on petitioner’s medical records, but it did not contain any changes to the legal allegations made in this case. *See id.* On February 5, 2024, the Secretary of Health and Human Services (“respondent”) filed a Rule 4(c) report indicating that this case was appropriate for compensation under the terms of the Vaccine Act for a SIRVA Table Injury. ECF No. 40. On February 7, 2024, the Chief Special Master issued a Ruling on Entitlement finding that petitioner was entitled to compensation. ECF No. 42.

I. Items of Compensation

A. Pain and Suffering

Respondent proffers that petitioner should be awarded \$53,500.00 in pain and suffering.

See 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a)(4). Petitioner agrees.

B. Past Unreimbursable Expenses

Evidence supplied by petitioner documents that she incurred past unreimbursable expenses pertaining to her vaccine-related injury. Respondent proffers that petitioner should be awarded past unreimbursable expenses in the amount of \$1,092.90. *See* 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a)(1)(B). Petitioner agrees.

These amounts represent all elements of compensation to which petitioner is entitled under 42 U.S.C. § 300aa-15(a). Petitioner agrees.

II. Form of the Award

Petitioner is a competent adult. Evidence of guardianship is not required in this case. Respondent recommends that the compensation provided to petitioner should be made through a lump sum payment as described below and requests that the Chief Special Master's decision and the Court's judgment award the following:¹ a lump sum payment of \$54,592.90, in the form of a check payable to petitioner.

III. Summary of Recommended Payment Following Judgment

Lump sum payable to petitioner, Elizabeth Sears: **\$54,592.90**

¹ Should petitioner die prior to entry of judgment, the parties reserve the right to move the Court for appropriate relief. In particular, respondent would oppose any award for future lost earnings and future pain and suffering.

Respectfully submitted,

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/s/ Benjamin P. Warder
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